

### *Would Provide Desperately Needed Investment in America's Clean Water Infrastructure*

**WASHINGTON, DC** – Today, Congressman Earl Blumenauer (OR-3), introduced the Water Protection and Reinvestment Act of 2012(HR 6249), a bill that will provide a deficit-neutral, consistent, and protected source of revenue to help states replace, repair, and rehabilitate critical wastewater treatment facilities.

Over the past several years, America's water infrastructure needs have grown to over \$9.3 billion per year while federal funding for clean water has declined and averaged just over \$1.25 billion a year since 2000. This enormous discrepancy pushes a higher and higher percentage of costs onto local governments and ratepayers, whose rates have grown at twice the pace of inflation in recent years. New sources of revenue, which will reduce consumer costs over the long term, are necessary to meet communities' water infrastructure and environmental restoration needs.

***“We have dedicated funding for the nation’s transportation systems,” said Congressman Blumenauer. “It’s time to establish a similar trust fund to finance clean water infrastructure. We cannot continue to place the burden of protecting public health, restoring the environment, and reducing pollution on communities and individuals who are simply unable to afford it.”***

The Water Protection and Reinvestment Act would raise revenue by assessing small fees on a broad base of those who use water and contribute to water pollution. These revenue sources were analyzed in a recent Government Accountability Office report and are expected to raise around \$6.5 billion a year. These funds would go to a variety of programs including grants and loans through the existing Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (CWSRF), as well as grants for energy and water efficiency; sewer overflow control; research, development, and technology demonstration; and workforce development. The National Association of Utility Contractors estimates that for every \$1 billion invested in water infrastructure, 26,000 jobs are created. Using that estimate, the Water Protection and Reinvestment Act would create at least 169,000 jobs over ten years.

Numerous national organizations have expressed their support for the bill including the American Society of Civil Engineers, Association of General Contractors, Sierra Club, National

Association of Clean Water Agencies, Rural Community Assistance Partnership, Water Infrastructure Network, International Union of Operating Engineers, American Council of Engineering Companies, American Rivers, American Public Works Association, Alliance for Water Efficiency, and United Association of Plumbers & Pipefitters.

***“For too long, those who are using vast amounts of water and contributing most to the pollution of our water have gotten free ride on the backs of taxpayers,” continued Blumenauer. “This broadly supported bill will make sure that everyone pays their fair share, and that the funds raised go to securing clean water for our future.”***

**Statements of Support for the Water Protection and Reinvestment Act:**

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Andrew W. Herrmann, P.E., President of the American Society of Civil Engineers:

***“America’s wastewater infrastructure systems are aging and overburdened.□ Unless new investments are made by 2020, unreliable and insufficient water infrastructure will cost the average American household \$900 a year in higher water rates and lower wages. In addition, without these investments, businesses can expect an additional \$147 billion in increased costs and the economy will lose nearly 700,000 jobs by 2020”***

Ken Kirk, CEO of the National Association of Clean Water Agencies

***“A Federal Clean Water Trust Fund is the only way to put real money on the table to help communities across the country struggling to meet the ambitious objectives and goals of the Clean Water Act. NACWA commends Congressman Blumenauer for introducing The Water Protection and Reinvestment Act of 2012, a bill that would generate much needed resources and enable us to start closing the water infrastructure funding gap.□ Every American deserves access to clean and safe water, and we urge Congress to swiftly enact this legislation.”***

David A. Raymond, President and CEO of the American Council of Engineering Companies

***“The American Council of Engineering Companies commends Representative Earl Blumenauer for introducing the "Water Protection and Reinvestment Act" -- bipartisan legislation that will create a budget-neutral mechanism providing over \$7 B in sustainable annual funding for our nation's clean water infrastructure. The engineering community, along with our clean water partners, supports this legislation and hopes that it can move swiftly through Congress.”***

Peter B. King, Executive Director of the American Public Works Association:

***“APWA applauds Congressman Blumenauer for his leadership and commitment to local governments and infrastructure development. We strongly support the Water Protection and Reinvestment Act as it provides a much needed new and innovative funding mechanism for infrastructure projects. Public works professionals manage and operate clean water facilities in communities across the country and recognize there is a critical need for a federal partnership in assuring continuation of clean water.”***

Stephen E. Sandherr, Chief Executive Officer, The Associated General Contractors of America

***“Water Infrastructure is the last major public infrastructure category without a dedicated trust fund. We have seen great success with the “user pays” concept with highways, airports, harbors, and inland waterways, and we think that success can be replicated again. Allowing future investments to come from dedicated and sustainable long-term funding sources, instead of depending solely on unreliable and unpredictable annual appropriations, will provide market certainty for contractors and our municipal partners. With the estimated infrastructure needs soaring, and federal investment steadily declining, establishing and funding a clean water trust fund would help the construction industry create thousands of new jobs, secure vital economic growth, and protect our nation’s environmental and public health.”***

William P. Hite, General President of the United Association of Plumbers & Pipefitters

***“The United Association of Plumbers & Pipefitters strongly supports the Water Protection and Reinvestment Act introduced by Congressman Blumenauer. At a time when the construction industry is facing high unemployment while seeking to emerge from the national recession, this legislation not only puts people back to work, but also protects the health and safety of our country's water supply. Ensuring American families have access to clean, safe water is a top priority for the United Association and should also be a top priority for our elected officials in Washington, DC.”***

Robert Stewart, Executive Director of the Rural Community Assistance Partnership

***“Wastewater services are critical to community and economic development in rural America. The Water Protection and Reinvestment Act would provide a long-term, sustainable, dedicated funding source for wastewater infrastructure. With these funds, small towns would have access to the affordable financing they need to develop the infrastructure necessary to attract industry and entrepreneurs, create jobs, and protect public health and the environment.”***

□ Katherine Baer, Senior Director of the Clean Water Program for American Rivers

***“As we approach the 40th Anniversary of the Clean Water Act, It is time to redouble our effort to achieve clean water. We must embrace smart approaches to clean and reliable water that integrate green infrastructure, water efficiency and other innovation. By supporting these wise water infrastructure investments, the Water Protection and reinvestment Act will help us achieve clean water for generations to come.”***

□ Ken Kirk, Executive Director of the National Association of Clean Water Agencies

***“A Federal Clean Water Trust Fund is the only way to put real money on the table to help communities across the country struggling to meet the ambitious objectives and goals of the Clean Water Act. NACWA commends Congressman Blumenauer for introducing The Water Protection and Reinvestment Act of 2012, a bill that would generate much needed resources and enable us to start closing the water infrastructure funding gap.”***

***Every American deserves access to clean and safe water, and we urge Congress to swiftly enact this legislation.”***

Peter B. King, Executive Director of the American Public Works Association

***“Public works professionals have long known about the looming crisis within water infrastructure, including regulations, increased population growth, and constrained resources. Public works professionals need a long term dedicated source of funding, like the legislation introduced by Congressman Blumenauer today, to overcome these challenges and to continue provide clean and safe water to their communities and local environment.”*** □ □

Water Infrastructure Network

***“As America’s leading construction, engineering, conservation, labor, municipal, and manufacturing organizations, the members of the Water Infrastructure Network (WIN) strongly support the ‘The Water Protection and Reinvestment Act’ as introduced by Congressman Blumenauer.□ This legislation will establish for the first time a water trust fund, guaranteeing long overdue investment in our nation’s critical water infrastructure.□ ‘The Water Protection and Reinvestment Act’ will create nearly 2 million quality jobs in the short term and contribute to the long term competitiveness of American industry.□ Clean water is essential to the health of our economy our environment and our citizens.”***

National Utility Contractors Association

***“NUCA thanks Representative Blumenauer for introducing the Water Protection and Reinvestment Act of 2012. This legislation is fundamental to building capital for America’s deteriorating water infrastructure which will ultimately lead to more jobs and cleaner water.”***

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